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DISEASES OF THE HEART.

At the meetings of the Medical Society of London on the 16th and 23d of October, the subject of diseases of the heart was discussed, and much interesting information elicited. It was introduced by Mr. Blenkairne, who stated that he had dined, twelve months since, with a gentleman who, for a year before, had been subject to violent palpitation of the heart, frequent fainting fits, and great depression of spirits. His pulse was strong and throbbing, and intermitted at every third beat. The diagnosis which he (Mr. B.) had given, was, that the heart was organically affected, and this opinion coincided with that of other practitioners who had been consulted on the case. The patient, a short time since, went to Brighton, where he staid a month, during which time he was attacked with gout. He had since suffered neither from palpitation, fainting fits, or depression of spirits; his pulse was now perfectly natural in every respect, and only 60 in the minute. His health is now excellent.

Mr. Dendy was inclined to think that there had been metastasis in this case, and not that one disease had been cured by the supervention of another of a different character. He thought it might be probable that the attack at Brighton partook more of the character of rheumatism than of gout, and that its occurrence had the effect of relieving the disposition to that disease in the pericardium, which interfered with the heart's action. He believed he was right in stating, that after the removal of the steatomatous tumor from the head of George the Fourth, the wound seemed to be going on well for a few days, when it began to discharge a quantity of ichorous matter, and erysipelas made its appearance. An attack of the gout coming on altered the character of the sore, the discharge improved in quality, and the wound rapidly healed.

Mr. Clifton was inclined to account for the cure in Mr. Blenkairne's case, in another manner. He had seen cases where disease of the heart had set in with the most alarming symptoms, which, however, disappeared as the heart accommodated itself to the affection, and the patient, by quiet and the avoidance of all kinds of excitement, lost all symptoms of disease, and lived sometimes for years without inconvenience, though he perished, ultimately, of the affection. He remembered an instance of this kind in a gentleman, who, for five years, had never suffered from a symptom of heart disease, though at its com-

mencement the symptoms were most alarming. He died after a fortnight's illness; the heart was extensively disorganized.

Mr. Hooper remembered an instance in which the symptoms of diseased heart were suspended in a young lady, after her marriage; but they always returned during the time of pregnancy. Immediately after parturition, however, she was again in apparent health. The stethoscope did not detect organic change. She died three weeks after one of her confinements; no post-mortem, however, was allowed.

Mr. Headland thought we were much more frequently in error, in considering functional diseases of the heart organic, than in considering organic diseases merely functional. How many instances had occurred in which the stethoscope detected organic disease of the heart, when the patient dying from some other affection, the heart was found healthy? The disturbance of the heart's action, in the generality of cases, he considered to arise from mental causes, or from sympathy with disorder of the digestive function.

Dr. J. Johnson said that he agreed with those who thought that functional disorders of the heart were much more frequently mistaken for organic changes than *vice versa*, and this was the case particularly as regarded gout. When gout was suspended for a time, it was common for the pulse to become quick and throbbing, and the heart to palpitate violently, exciting great alarm, and leading to the supposition that the heart was organically affected. All the symptoms were, however, at once removed on the recurrence of the gout. Cases of functional disorder simulating organic change, were mentioned by many authors. Dr. Parry, of Bath, had recorded a case in which the heart's action was so violent as to wear away the ribs; yet even in that instance, after death, the symptoms having previously ceased, the heart was found healthy. It was a common error of young practitioners, to consider the heart as organically diseased when its function only was much interfered with, and this error had become more general, he was sorry to say, since the stethoscope had come into use. He had known various symptoms of affection of the heart, such as its beating over a larger space than natural, &c., all give way before the restoration of the general health, and the bracing of the nervous system. When the uterine function was not properly performed, it was common for the patient to suffer from palpitation for weeks together; yet this entirely ceased on the organ resuming its healthy action. On the other hand, however, it must not be forgotten, that organic disease might creep on even to a fatal termination, without the occurrence of any symptoms to indicate its seat or nature. In illustration of this fact, he might mention the following case, which had come under his observation. Five years since he was called to see a gentleman who had suffered from hiccuph of a violent character for fourteen days. All the means used for its removal proved useless; but it eventually gave way under the use of large doses of musk. The patient then informed him that for several years he had suffered from "a load" just below the epigastrium, and about the umbilical region, and said he should certainly die from it. The patient was a corpulent man, and lived generously, particularly as

regarded food. The "load" was the only symptom he complained of; and, on examination, there was no hardness, tenderness, or other sign of organic change in the abdomen. He consulted most of the eminent practitioners in London, all of whom told him his disease was merely imaginary; he still, however, persisted in believing it a fatal one. Nine or ten months since he began to lose flesh; his appetite failed him, and he got weak, yet he only complained of the load. The abdomen was again carefully examined, but nothing was detected. For six or seven weeks before death, he kept his bed, lost his appetite entirely, and ejected most of the little nourishment that was administered to him. His pulse varied from 110 to 130. Soon after being confined to his bed, he had another severe attack of singultus, which lasted twelve days, and eventually was removed by arsenic, which had the effect also of putting a stop to periodic rigors and fevers, to which he had become subject. He got gradually weaker, and died, worn out by hectic, without any suffering. He (Dr. J.) had considered that he perished from the "climacteric disease," the general functions of the body having given way without the occurrence of organic change. The post-mortem examination, however, revealed the true state of the case. The stomach, lungs, heart, intestines, and liver, were found healthy. The gall bladder was almost entirely filled with a large number of calculi; the duct was free. The right kidney was sound; the left somewhat granular. Surrounding the left psoas muscle was a bag, or sac, which contained about a pint and a half of a dark, tarry, gelatinous fluid, of a most offensive odor, and peculiar appearance. The psoas muscle was so much disorganized as to be with difficulty detected. Now, here was extensive organic disease, which had gone on for months, at least, though he did not think it had existed for years, without producing any local symptoms; there was great constitutional disturbance, indeed, but it could not be traced to any cause. He thought the calculi might have existed in the gall bladder for years, but attributed the fatal result to the other disease. He believed that many diseases which were supposed to be climacteric, or a regular "break up," as Sir H. Hallford called them, could, by proper examination after death, be traced to some organic change.

Mr. Procter agreed with Dr. Johnson regarding the frequent occurrence of functional disorders of the heart. Commercial speculations particularly favored these disorders; he had noticed that they were very prevalent during the railway mania. Quieting irritation, and restoring the general health, were the best remedies.

Mr. Headland had noticed the falling away of the strength and appetite, and great emaciation, for three or four months, in two patients of his, in whom there was no evidence of organic disease; the patients were both men of intemperate habits; the most remarkable symptom in both cases was the total absence of sleep, in the procuring of which, narcotics, of the strongest kind, had no sort of effect. In one of these cases, after death, a fungoid growth, weighing from one and a half to two pounds, was found attached to the lower part of the capsule of the left kidney; the other patient had simple hypertrophy of this organ. In

neither case did a single symptom of organic affection of the kidneys exist. The urine was scanty in both instances.

Dr. J. Johnson said, that he had seen many deaths from intemperance; the absence of sleep before death, in these cases, was common; drunkards, at this period, paid a severe penalty for their intemperate habits.

Mr. Bryant recollected a case which had occurred to him some years since, in which the patient, a gentleman aged 70, died with symptoms very much resembling those which had occurred in the case related by Dr. Johnson. The patient was an intemperate man, and had been long ailing. When he (Mr. B.) was called to see him, he had suffered from unceasing hiccough for several days, and for this nothing afforded relief. Dr. Farre also saw the patient; it was concluded that there was organic disease of the stomach. He sunk gradually. The gall bladder was found full of biliary calculi, the stomach was darker than natural, but nothing more. The patient had complained of pain about the right kidney, but he referred no other symptom to the urinary organs; the urine was natural. The right kidney was healthy, but below it was a pouch containing about two ounces of stinking pus; the disease was connected with diseased vertebræ. Here was a case in which disease gradually advanced in an important part, without its exact seat being detected during life.—*Lancet*.

ON NATURAL MAGIC.

THE theory of accidental colors, so ingeniously developed by the successive labors of Scherffer, Epinus and Sir David Brewster, has been alluded to by the latter, in his treatise on natural magic, as probably adequate to account, in some instances, for spectral illusions; but for such only, in his opinion, it would seem, as may occur in full day light. Observation, however, has assured the writer that appearances of this kind are not so peculiar to the strong light of day, nor so rare as seems to have been supposed.

The retina of the eye, by the action of light upon it, has its sensibility weakened, which it will recover again completely, in the absence, or partially by the mitigation, of this action. When, therefore, one keeps his eyes for a time directed to a portion of black surface surrounded by white, the sensibility of all that part of the retina on which the white surface throws its light, is weakened in a much higher degree than that which is occupied by the image of the black portion. Then on turning off the eyes to a quarter from which light comes nearly uniform, the effect on this now most sensitive portion is contrasted with the slighter effect produced on the surrounding parts, and there appears to the observer, as it were, an image of light, in shape and size like the portion of black surface before viewed.

Now the *relative* amount of light reflected from white and from

adjacent dark surfaces, is probably the same, whether the incident light be feeble or strong, and consequently the *relative* strength of their respective impressions on the retina is also the same. And indeed, the eye, especially if it has been for some time, previously, in the dark, seems to be not less sensible to this difference of impression in a twilight than at noonday, provided the darkness be not too great, so as to render all objects nearly alike obscure. But however this may be, the appearances of ocular spectra in such fainter light, is favored by the fact that the attention does not then, owing to the partial obscurity in which the substantial objects before us lie, so readily and so almost unavoidably fix itself upon them, which if it should do, any image that may remain impressed on the retina is not regarded; for the mind, it seems, cannot attend to two things at the same time. Another reason why such phenomena are so seldom noticed by individuals who do not purposely take the preliminary steps necessary to produce them, is, that the eye is usually a restless organ, rarely dwelling upon the same part of an object for more than a few minutes at a time. The design and effect of this is, on a compensating principle, to prevent the formation of any impressions of such a character as to be inconveniently permanent or embarrassing to our vision. This propensity to wander is, however, sometimes overcome, and the occasions when this may happen are various.

A day or two since, listening to a public speaker at such a distance, that, to catch his words, I found it necessary continually to watch his lips, I at length cast a look towards the expanse of white ceiling beyond him, and saw a white picture clearly representing him, wherever I turned my eyes. The propensity before adverted to, is more commonly subdued involuntarily by grief, as for the decease of a friend. If, in consequence, by the accidental presence before the eye of a proper object, or a suitable combination of light and shade, a spectral appearance is then produced (it being supposed now partially dark), superstitious persons might very readily be led, with a little aid from imagination, particularly as the idea of his departed friend is now uppermost in his memory, to believe strenuously that he had seen the ghost of the deceased. The child who goes alone at dusk is prone to watch any black object, especially if it is made conspicuous by a prevailing whiteness of the objects about or beyond it. We can easily see how, on his looking round, his young imagination may, and not without a cause, be startled into a troublesome activity.

The writer well remembers with what sensation he has, in childhood, watched the spectres that on moonlight nights used to haunt the black garments hanging upon the white wall of his apartment. Any one may observe such phenomena very favorably on waking at dawn, by fixing the eyes for a considerable time (one minute or even less will suffice for an experiment) steadily upon a dark-colored object projected or situated on a white or whitish ground, and then looking off towards the white ground, when directly he will perceive a white representation of the object he has been viewing, either upon the

white ground, or between it and himself, according to his fancy. One can make it, when it is of a middling brightness, disappear and again reappear, by simply giving his attention, for a moment, to something beyond, and then again to the image. If the eye has been kept constantly on the same point of the dark object previously viewed, the white image of the latter will be a distinct and faithful representation. Otherwise it will be varied, and might, by a startled imagination, be easily conjured into the most frightful shapes. If a person is at twilight travelling towards a hill (or even a level space) covered with snow, and steadily watches another person in a dark dress, advancing a short distance before him, whose figure is projected towards the snow, he sees, on looking aside, a white spectre in human shape. It will in some instances appear to be roving, the observer all the time thinking that he follows it with his eyes, while in fact it depends for its motion upon this same movement of the eyes. Should it, before it fades in obscurity, arrive before some dark retreat, it there vanishes, for its appearance depends upon the light coming from objects beyond it. A result similar to those already described, might surprise a person who looks up, after having for sometime gazed down upon the path he is walking, the black soil of which is strongly contrasted with the bleached grass on either side.

Whoever will attentively watch the operation of this principle, in experiments which he can make almost anywhere, and with very little trouble, will, we think, be abundantly satisfied that it must have acted no inconsiderable part in keeping alive those superstitious impressions which in former ages have been so generally prevalent; and that it is the talisman which raises some at least of the apparitions that are occasionally alarming the young and the superstitious, at the present day.—*Silliman's Journal*.

DR. WEBB'S PRIZE DISSERTATION.

THE title of Dr. Webb's Prize Essay on Rheumatism, is made the text, in the last number of the Southern Medical Journal, for some pretty severe remarks on the use of opium in that disease. The editor thinks it savors not a little of quackery to recommend this course of treatment in all cases and all climates; and though it may answer in places where simple rheumatism alone is liable to occur, he contends for its hurtful tendency where bilious complaints are commonly associated with this disease. The following are his concluding remarks.

"Not willing to condemn with undue precipitation a practice so respectably and so ably advanced, we determined, on reading the essay, to adopt the practice urged by it, in the first case of rheumatism in which, as in not a few heretofore, we should be foiled in our ordinary course of treatment according to the best judgment on the true pathological condition. But before just such a case came to hand, we found a patient so severely affected with the excruciating pains incident to this disease, that, in our absence, and over the head of our prescription, he was

forced to resort to doses of laudanum to lull his sensibilities and lessen his pain. With the manifestation of this disposition, and with the hope of regulating the use of opium to a safer course than might be adopted at the impulse of his distress, we laid down the course in all respects according to Cazenave's plan. It was pursued until forty pills were taken. By this time we found great tendency to cerebral congestion from the direct action of the opium, with hepatic obstruction, evinced by sallow skin, brownish-yellow tongue, with hard, frequent, contracted pulse, &c., amounting to a very complete and *highly bilious* rheumatism, had resulted. Unwilling to press further a plan which reason as well as the experiment thus far condemned, we discontinued the course, and in its stead adopted the use of a pill of six grains of calomel, one grain of aloes, and half a grain of kermes every six hours. This restored the wonted hepatic secretion, preserved a steady perspiration, and the patient was speedily restored to health.

"With these experiments, then, and the reasonings which we have had on the subject, we have been brought to the language which Dr. Cullen applied to the use of cinchona, that we '*hold it to be manifestly hurtful, especially in the beginning, and in the truly inflammatory state at least; and probably generally in southern climates and bilious temperaments.*'

"We will observe, in the conclusion of this article, already greatly extended beyond the intended limits, that depletion was liberally used, and in the early part of the case; and that great spinal irritation existed in all the extent of the dorsal and lumbar spine, and most severe in the dorsal. This received the counter-excitation treatment usually enforced for this symptom, but without being corrected. It disappeared with the rheumatic symptoms."

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I have noticed, in your Journal, several communications on animal magnetism, fraught with many marvellous things, which bring to mind a variety of stories that I heard and read in childhood, about fairies, and witches, and wizards; ghosts, demons, and the like characters, too numerous to mention. What animal magnetism will amount to, or what will come of it, I cannot tell; but, I doubt not, the time will come, and now is, when the Arabian Nights Entertainments will be outdone in reality, and many things which have been looked upon as too absurd to be considered probabilities, or even possibilities, will be the sober realities of life—when the tables will be turned, and those who have been considered, by the world and themselves, as the wise men of their day, will be found profoundly ignorant of all true knowledge, especially of the science of human life; and, in their turn, will be the proper subjects of jest and ridicule to those they have made a butt of, and laughed at, as stultishly ignorant and superstitious. Where is the fairy tale or ghost story that is more incredible than the stories told about

animal magnetism? Where is one that is not as consistent? Where is the old man's whim, or old woman's whim, or old maid's whim, that outdoes them in point of inconsistency or incredibility? The person who believes the magnetizer's and magnetizee's tale, will believe anything, and is a fit subject for any imposture the crafty and designing may think proper to practise. O, but, says one, these stories about animal magnetism are told by very respectable men, and we must be careful how we bring their assertions into doubt. Very well—but what does their being respectable show? Why, it shows that there is very much gullibility in the world yet, and that men are not only as liable to be imposed upon now as they ever were, but, also, that they take pleasure therein, and glory in their shame.

What are these stories about animal magnetism?—are they not of a piece with fortune-telling, juggling, necromancy, astrology, magic, augury, the Scottish second-sight, and many other things of the like nature that might be mentioned? Is animal magnetism anything more than a new scheme to impose upon the credulity of the people? Are not those who have so much to say and do in favor of it, acting as impostors? "Take care," exclaim a certain few, "they are, many of them at least, very respectable men—living in cities; some adopt hypotheses and spin out fine theories from them; some are from France, which is considered by many as the very seat and origin of all true knowledge; they all have much effrontery—make great pretensions—and all that is now wanting to make their scheme go well, is a chance for them to cry persecution; therefore, we must be careful concerning what we say, or they will not be able to successfully and profitably hoodwink the people." But, I would ask, ought not the subject to be set forth in its true light? The fact that men are respectable—that they live in densely populated places—that they adopt hypotheses and spin fine theories—that they come from France or any other country—is not sufficient to convince me that any doctrine or system is either true or false.

There is one fact, however, which, although it appears unaccountable and unreasonable in the extreme, is, nevertheless, true; and that is the proneness of the American people to ape foreigners, in manners, customs, doctrines, fashions, and evil practices. It is a fact unbecoming the American character, and ought to be despised by every true Yankee. France is aped the most. Its being known that a thing comes from France, is sufficient, with a host of Americans, to establish its truth and utility—indeed, so greedy are they to eat the crumbs of France, that they eagerly watch whatever comes thence and gobble it down, without stopping, or wishing, to determine whether it is wholesome food or not.

The above remarks are strikingly exemplified in medical and religious matters. What mode of practice in medicine, or theory of metaphysics, has there been adopted or originated in that country, that has not found its servile followers in this? There are men of first-rate abilities in France; there are also men of first-rate abilities in the United States; and if the people of the United States, instead of leaning upon the French or any other nation for instruction and example in arts, science

and morals, would stand upon their own bottom and rely upon their own resources—if they would become originators, instead of imitators, in *all things*, the time would soon arrive when they would be excelled by no people on earth—and I fervently wish that that time may soon come.

But to return to my theme ; *if* the principles urged by the votaries of animal magnetism are true, what are we to expect from it ? Why, nothing less than a great reformation in the moral, political, medical and social world ; also a mighty revolution in arts, science and literature. A glorious era is just begun. Vice, in her high career, must, ere long, stand discomfited and dismayed, and virtue will triumphantly reign with benign influence over all minds. Wars must cease, political parties and intrigues must have an end ; the whole world must soon know and enjoy the blessings of universal peace, political honesty and true patriotism. Diseases must take to themselves wings and fly away, for the true panacea is now discovered. Doctors must shut up shop, burn or bury their medicaments, take a last, long, lingering look at their anatomical preparations, and betake themselves to some other employment—to whaling, perhaps, or to making beet sugar. Coffin-makers and grave-diggers will be wholly unemployed, and under the necessity of following some other business for a livelihood—because death must soon grin his last horrid grin, “ and hide his hideous head in shame, confusion and despair.”

Backbitings and talking scandal must cease ; consequently gossips must sit mum, and tea parties go out of fashion. Jealousies and envyings no longer shall exist, for Mesmer will soon remove the causes on which they depend, by showing, magnetically, that all men are equal, both in mental and corporeal powers ; and we shall soon see the petty distinctions of great and small, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, wise and foolish, handsome and ugly, swept away, and buried in oblivion, by the omnipotence of animal magnetism. No longer may the philosopher pedantically exult over the idiot, or the scholar over the clown, for, let them be magnetized, and they will all be omniscient, and, of course, one cannot brag over the other.

The time is at hand, when all desiderata in the arts and sciences will be supplied, and it will be found that animal magnetism is only a collective name for all the arts and sciences when brought to perfection. We shall soon be able to determine whether the earth is hollow, as Captain Symmes asserted, or not ; also, whether events recorded in history are rightly chronicled or not. In fact, we shall have neither past nor future time, but all will be present.

In making these assertions, I call on animal magnetism to sustain me and confound the railers and disbelievers. The witch of Endor will not be looked upon as a mysterious personage, in time to come, and the raising up of Samuel will be nothing more astonishing than what will happen daily. Sceptics will no longer be able, or have a desire, to cavil at the miracles of Scripture, for they will be as nothing compared with the miracles that will be wrought by animal magnetism.

Perhaps some will think that I am extravagant in my reliance upon the word *if* ; but I would say to them—I write as I seem to be influenced, and, I doubt not, there is a secret influence exerted over me by

some powerful magnetizer, perhaps Mesmer himself, that endows me with the spirit of prophecy, and enables me to declare, in part, what shall be achieved by animal magnetism.

ZOROASTER.

East Clarendon, Vt., Jan. 1, 1838.

PREMATURE LABOR ARTIFICIALLY PRODUCED.

[The following case of artificial production of premature labor was communicated to the London Lancet by Mr. E. A. Cory.]

Mrs. H., of short stature, and aged about 30, had twice undergone the operation of embryotomy. Mr. Cory attended her, for the first time, about three years since, when the same operation was again deemed necessary, and performed. The pelvic deformity was of the reniform character, the space between the sacro-vertebral angle and symphysis pubis being about two inches and three fourths. It was consequently determined, should the recurrence of pregnancy render it necessary, that the premature induction of parturition at the seventh month of uterogestation, should be had recourse to. She had again become pregnant, and it was calculated that she had arrived at the seventh month of her pregnancy about Thursday, the 14th of September last. The ergot of rye was now given, and at six, P. M., soon after the administration of the second dose, the uterine energy became slightly excited, and it was interesting as well as satisfactory to observe its gradual increase soon after the repetition of each dose of the medicine. On the next day (Friday), at one, P. M., the parturient pains were tolerably active, but at considerable intervals. A vaginal examination was instituted, and the membranes were felt pressing against the undilated os uteri. Saturday, at eleven, A. M.—The pains had gradually diminished in force and frequency, and she had experienced no pain from yesterday, at four o'clock, P. M., to the present time, and was, to use her own expression, "quite well again." The institution of another vaginal examination demonstrated that the os uteri had not in the least degree increased in dilatation, and that the pressure of the membranes, which had been previously experienced, had now entirely subsided. Instead of repeating the *secale cornutum*, lest it might destroy the infant, it was thought most prudent to rupture the membranes, the distension of which had now completely subsided. She was again visited on Sunday, at a little after one, P. M. She remained in a similar condition, and there had been no accession of the pains of parturition. On Monday she had not yet experienced any pain, and the bowels being in a constipated state, Mr. C. prescribed an aloetic purgative, with a carminative addition, which had the effect of thoroughly evacuating the bowels, and exciting the uterus to action; so that early on Tuesday morning, the pains of labor commenced with considerable activity, and continued with but little intermission until six o'clock in the evening, when she was delivered of a living infant of healthy appearance. The foetal head occupied several hours in its passage through the contracted pelvis, and after

expulsion, presented on its lateral portion an evident indentation, and was also considerably flattened. The whole process terminated as in a common accouchment. The placenta was expelled with but little assistance, about half an hour after the birth of the infant, which was restored in ten minutes by immersion in the warm bath and by artificial respiration. The child remains at the present time (October 16th) healthy and vigorous, takes the breast freely, and there is every probability that it will continue to live. The patient has not suffered the least pain or inconvenience since her delivery; in short, her recovery was most rapid.

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, JANUARY 24, 1838.

MARINE HOSPITALS.

IN obedience to certain resolutions passed in the Senate of the United States, the 20th of February, 1837, the Secretary of the Treasury asked several of the Collectors of the Customs, at the North and South, the following questions :

"1st. What it will cost to erect three hospitals of suitable dimensions, for the relief of sick and disabled seamen and watermen upon the waters of the Mississippi river, at the most suitable places for that purpose; also, what it will cost to erect the same number, if needed, at the most important points on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

"2d. To draw up the project of a law to regulate the disbursement of funds for the relief of sick and disabled seamen, and for the government of hospitals erected for that purpose.

"3d. To enumerate those ports and places in the United States where, because suitable accommodations for the sick cannot be obtained, or from any other cause, there is a strong necessity for hospitals; and to make report on this and the other resolutions at the next session of Congress."

"Congress acquiescing in the necessity of such institutions at New Orleans and Mobile, appropriated, by the act of 3d March last, the sum of \$70,000 for the purchase of a site and erection of suitable buildings for the hospital at the former place, and the sum of \$10,000 for the same objects at the latter. Arrangements are in progress, and it is expected will be perfected, for the construction of a suitable edifice at New Orleans. It is ascertained, however, that the sum appropriated for a similar purpose at Mobile, is inadequate to the object. Accordingly, Mobile and the other two previously indicated as entitled to priority in the location of such institutions, may be regarded as the most important points on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts where hospitals are, in the estimation of the department, needed.

"From estimates submitted to the collector by practical workmen, it is believed a sum of \$15,000, in addition to the existing appropriations, would be required to purchase a site and erect a suitable hospital at Mo-

bile ; and it is estimated that the sum of \$20,000 would be requisite for the same purpose at each of the other places."

The Collector of Passamaquoddy says there are so few sick in his district, and those always easily accommodated, that a hospital is considered unnecessary. The Collector of Portland shows that a hospital is wanted there exceedingly. There are three thousand seamen in the tonnage of that district—and yet these poor fellows, when sick, are thrust into the Portland *Alms-house*!—a disgrace to the government of the United States. One is required also at Newport, R. I., and another at Ocracoke, North Carolina. Key West has no accommodation for the sick. The Collector is allowed to pay only three dollars per week for a sick sailor, and yet there is not a negro family in the whole region who would take one of these unfortunate seamen into their house short of seven dollars per week ! What shiftless, miserable management is this for a great nation ! The Collector supposes an edifice of wood would answer very well. Mr. Breedlove, the Collector of New Orleans, wrote the following sensible letter to the Secretary.

"From my long personal acquaintance with the trade of the valley of the Mississippi, I feel well assured that the most prominent and useful points of location for marine hospitals, for the relief of sick and disabled seamen engaged in the navigation of the waters of the Mississippi river and its tributaries, are Louisville, in Kentucky ; St. Louis, in Missouri ; and Memphis, in Tennessee.

"My experience in erecting buildings does not enable me to speak confidently as to the cost of suitable edifices at these points. Judging, however, from the price of materials and labor in the western country, I am of opinion that the sum of twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars each, for Louisville and St. Louis, would be sufficient ; and for Memphis, I would recommend the expenditure of fifty thousand dollars, for the reason that this establishment would be the receptacle of the seamen of both the Ohio and Missouri trade.

"The necessity of a marine hospital at this port has been made manifest to Congress, and induced an appropriation by that body, at its last session, of seventy thousand dollars, for the purchase of a site, and the erection of a suitable edifice. The sum appropriated will be found inadequate to the accomplishment of the object, as will be shown by the plans, specifications and estimates, now preparing by sundry persons, in accordance with invitations for bids, issued by me under your instructions, all of which will be forwarded to you immediately after the first day of September next, that being the day fixed for opening the proposals that may be made. The plan and estimate furnished you last spring for this object is not on a scale beyond what is and will be required for the comfort of the seamen that visit this great and growing seaport."

The Collector of Louisville, in speaking of the cost of medical services for the proposed hospital, remarks—there will be wanted :

"1st. A resident physician and surgeon, with good qualifications for the discharge of his duties, who shall devote his whole time to the care of the establishment. He should have three or four students as dressers, and these could easily be obtained for their board, on account of the facilities the hospital would furnish them for prosecuting their studies. These, as well as the superintendent, should be under the guidance and control of the physician. The salary of a competent physician would be about \$2,000 a year."

Now this is just double the salary of a surgeon in the Marine Hospitals of New England. As a measure of economy, the Secretary now proposes to have it made lawful for the President to assign and employ surgeons and assistant surgeons of the army and navy to go on duty in the several hospitals already established, or to be hereafter established. So that there is a prospect that all now holding appointments, however meritorious, as surgeons in marine hospitals, will have their walking papers. All this on the score of *economy*! It is furthermore proposed that the collectors of ports, for keeping an eye to the doctor, in the ostensible character of *director* of the hospitals, shall receive from \$250 to \$500 per annum.

Although we highly approve of the proposition of erecting some half a dozen new marine hospitals, we object to the employment of army and navy surgeons. There is not half enough of these at present; and the whole scheme, instead of benefiting the sick sailor, would only really go to increase the already princely salaries of the collectors, which now strongly contrast with those of the medical staff or hospital surgeons.

Boylston Prize Questions for 1836 and 1837.—It will be recollected that Dr. Holmes, of this city, was the fortunate author of three essays in succession, for which he received the Boylston medal; and it will also be remembered that the first was published in a remarkably neat manner, and distributed to all the members of the Massachusetts Medical Society, throughout the Commonwealth, free of expense—an individual act of generosity, for which we are all indebted to Dr. George Cheyne Shattuck, the president. Inquiries have frequently been made for Dr. H.'s *two last* dissertations; and until last week, we could not fathom the reason why they had not been given to the public. The cause of the delay is now apparent. Dr. Holmes has had leisure for preparing a highly finished volume of 371 pages, 8vo. which contains all three of his prize dissertations. The first is entitled—*Dissertation on Intermittent Fever in New England*; the second—*Dissertation on Neuralgia*; and the third—*Dissertation on Direct Exploration*. To enhance the value of this excellent publication, a map—a colored one, too—accompanies the first article, to enable those unacquainted with the geography of New England, to find the localities referred to in the memoir, where intermittent fever is supposed to have originated. Lastly, a dedication is made to P. C. A. Louis, Doctor in Medicine of the Faculty of Paris and St. Petersburg, and President of the Société Médicale d'Observation.

By another week we shall have had an opportunity, at least, of reading two of the dissertations, now seen for the first time. We beg, however, to direct the immediate attention of all our readers to this valuable contribution to medical science. The author must be substantially encouraged—and if read, there is no fear of his being a loser by the enterprise of publishing on his own account. This is a proper book for distribution at the next anniversary meeting of the Medical Society, if one is not already bespoken.

Extraordinary Case of Electrical Excitement.—Dr. Hosford, of Orford, N. H., relates, in the last No. of Silliman's Journal, the case of a lady in that town, who became unconsciously charged with electricity at the

time of the occurrence of an unusual aurora borealis, on the 25th of January, 1837. This extraordinary state continued until the middle of the following May, during most of which time she was capable of giving electrical sparks to every conducting body that came within the sphere of her electrical influence. When her finger was brought within one sixteenth of an inch of a metallic body, a spark that was heard, seen and felt, passed every second. When seated motionless, with her feet on the iron stove-hearth, three or four sparks per minute would pass to the stove, notwithstanding the insulation of her shoes and silk hosiery. When most favorably circumstanced, four sparks per minute of one inch and a half, would pass from the end of her finger to a brass ball on the stove; these were quite brilliant, distinctly seen and heard in any part of a large room, and sharply felt when they passed to another person. These experiments were so often repeated that there was no doubt left of their actual occurrence. The lady had no internal evidence of this faculty, which was only manifest to her when the sparks left her. Her health had never been good, though she had seldom been confined to her bed. She had suffered much from unseated neuralgia in various parts of her system, for some months previous to her electrical development. Her health is now better than for many years. Dr. H. thinks this phenomenon was not caused by the aurora alluded to, but that it was an appendage of the animal system.

Medical College in Richmond, Virginia.—We learn, by the southern papers, that the President and Trustees of the Hampden Sidney College, upon the application of the Faculty of Arts, at a meeting of the Board on the 1st of December last, resolved to establish a medical department in the city of Richmond, and the Faculty was forthwith organized by the appointment of six Professors, who have since accepted the professorships.

Colchicum in Scarlatina.—Mr. Tait, of Edinburgh, has lately been very successful in the use of colchicum in cases of scarlatina. It was administered chiefly to those which partook of the pure inflammatory type, in which bloodletting, both general and local, was usually first had recourse to, together with a purgative. The dose of the vinum colchici, in the strong and robust, was twelve or fifteen drops every three or four hours, in a little water sweetened with syrup. For children of four or six years, three or four drops were begun with. The colchicum was continued till all the inflammatory symptoms were subdued; a blister round the throat being all that was necessary to complete the cure.

Felons.—I have succeeded, in a number of instances, in removing the pain and discussing the inflammation of this painful affection, when consulted early, and in the later period of the disease have afforded the patient great relief, by smearing the finger affected with good extract of belladonna, and applying a diachylon plaster. A.

Hydrophobia—Strychnine.—Dr. Epps, of London, has seen effects produced by the administration of strychnine, similar to hydrophobia. In

one instance these distressing symptoms were relieved by a plaster, sprinkled with powdered iodine, down the spine, from the back part of the head to between the shoulders. From this result, Dr. E. thinks the application of an iodine plaster all the way down the spine, would produce benefit in hydrophobia.

Laxative Pill.—It is acknowledged to be a difficult thing, in many instances, to regulate the bowels. The ext. colocynth. comp., the pil. aloes et myrrhæ, the pil. rhei comp.—all, in many cases, fail to do this; besides that they all are apt to induce hæmorrhoids. To supply the consequent deficiency, I beg to draw the attention of the readers of the *Lancet* to the following admirable formula: R. Aloes barbadonnis; extracti glycyrrhizæ; saponis hispanici; theriacæ communis. Solve ex aqua pura; deinde spissa leni calore. Fiat massa. Signa, pilula aloes diluta.

Some six or eight grains may be taken daily, as a dinner pill, or at bed time.

I think that this preparation will be found to be more generally useful than those which are at present contained in our Pharmacopœias.—*London Lancet*.

Cauterisation of the Eye for Amaurosis.—In certain cases of amaurosis, particularly in those where an indication exists for acting on the branches of the fifth pair of nerves, M. Serre, of Montpellier, says he has derived great advantage from cauterising the surface of the globe with the solid nitrate of silver.—*Bul. Therap.*

White Race of Atlas.—M. Guyon, chief surgeon to the African army, writes to M. Dureau de la Malle, that at Bougia there is now living, a woman originally from the interior, supposed to be descended from the white tribe of Mount Aureps. She is at most twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age, of very agreeable physiognomy, blue eyes, fair hair, beautiful teeth, and has a very delicate white skin. She is married to the Imaun of the mosques, Sidi Hamed, by whom she has had three children, bearing a strong resemblance to herself. M. Arago observes, that these white people are not so rare in that part of the world as might be supposed, for when he was going from Bougia to Algiers, in 1808, by land, he saw women of all ages in the different villages, who were quite white, had blue eyes and fair hair, but that the nature of his journey did not permit him to stop and ask if they came from any peculiar tribe.—*Athenæum*.

The Cholera in Africa.—The cholera has just broken out in the Dey's Hospital at Algiers. On the 14th of October 17 cases and 9 deaths were reported. At Bona, where the epidemic has been prevailing for some time, the number of cases, on the 17th of October, had amounted to 328, the deaths to 180. One of the most curious points in the history of the Asiatic cholera is, perhaps, the steady proportion of deaths to cases which may be observed to have occurred in all parts of the world, and in all climates. This fact proves how very little has as yet been done in the treatment of the disease.—*London Lancet*.

DIED,—At Petersham, Dr. J. Deane, aged 63.

Whole number of deaths in Boston, for the week ending Jan. 20, 32. Males, 19—Females, 13.

Consumption, 5—scarlet fever, 3—old age, 3—dropsy on the brain, 2—inflammation of the lungs, 1—lung fever, 1—gastritis, 1—erysipelas, 1—dropsy, 1—infantile, 1—cancer, 1—fits, 1—debility, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 1—typhus fever, 1—accidental, 1—stillborn, 3.

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.—COUNSELLORS' MEETING.

A STATED meeting of the Counsellors of the Massachusetts Medical Society will be held at the Society's Room, Athenæum Building, in Pearl street, on WEDNESDAY, the 7th day of February next, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

Boston, Jan. 23.

epm

JOHN HOMANS, Rec. Sec'y.

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

THE subscriber proposes to take a few medical students, and to connect a small school with his private establishment for the treatment of invalids and for surgical operations. He has procured convenient rooms, and has secured the necessary facilities for anatomical inquiries and demonstrations. His pupils will also have the privilege of witnessing such interesting and important cases as occur in the private practice of a country physician and surgeon.

Springfield, January, 1838.

Jan. 17.

JOSEPH H. FLINT.

VACCINE VIRUS.

PHYSICIANS in any section of the United States can procure ten quills charged with PURE VACCINE VIRUS by return mail, on addressing the editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, enclosing one dollar, *post paid*, without which, no letter will be taken from the post office.

Oct. 25.

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

THE subscribers are associated for the purpose of giving a complete course of medical instruction, and will receive pupils on the following terms:

The pupils will be admitted to the practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and will receive clinical lectures on the cases they witness there. Instruction, by lectures or examinations, will be given in the intervals of the public lectures, every week day.

On Midwifery, and the Diseases of Women and Children, and on Chemistry,	by	DR. CHANNING.
On Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, and Materia Medica,	"	DR. WARE.
On the Principles and Practice of Surgery,	"	DR. OTIS.
On Anatomy,	"	DR. LEWIS.

The students are provided with a room in Dr. Lewis's house, where they have access to a large library. Lights and fuel without any charge. The opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of Anatomy are not inferior to any in the country.

The fees are \$100—to be paid in advance. No credit given, except on sufficient security of some person in Boston, nor for a longer period than six months.

Applications are to be made to Dr. Walter Channing, Tremont Street, opposite the Tremont House, Boston.

Oct. 18—1f

WALTER CHANNING,
JOHN WARE,
GEORGE W. OTIS, JR.
WINSLOW LEWIS, JR.

TO MEDICAL STUDENTS.

THE undersigned are associated for the purpose of instructing in all the branches of Medicine and Surgery. A suitable room will be provided, and pupils will have the use of an extensive medical library, opportunities for seeing the practice of one of the districts of the Dispensary and of the Eye and Ear Infirmary, and of attending a course of lectures on the diseases of the eye.

A regular course of recitations and examinations will include all the required professional works.

Anatomical instruction and private dissection will form a prominent part in the study of the pupils. For further information, apply to either of the subscribers.

Franklin Street, Nov. 9, 1836.

July 19—6m

JOHN JEFFRIES, M.D.
R. W. HOOPER, M.D.
JOHN H. DIX, M.D.

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

THE subscribers have associated for the purpose of giving medical instruction. A convenient room has been provided for this purpose, which will be open to the students at all hours. They will have access to an extensive medical library, and every other necessary facility for the acquirement of a thorough medical education.

Opportunities will be offered for the observation of diseases and their treatment in the Dispensary districts, embracing Wards 1, 2 and 3, and in cases which will be treated at the room daily.

Instruction will be given by clinical and other lectures, and by examinations at least twice a week. Sufficient attention will be paid to Practical Anatomy.

For further information, application may be made at the room, over 103 Hanover street, or to the subscribers.

Boston, August 9, 1837.

EPHRAIM BUCK, M.D.
ASA B. SNOW, M.D.
E. WALTER LEACH, M.D.
HENRY G. CLARK, M.D.
JOSEPH MORIARTY, M.D.

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